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ART. I. — *The Letters of HORACE WALPOLE, Earl of Orford, including numerous Letters now first published from the Original Manuscripts.* Philadelphia : Lea and Blanchard. 4 vols. 8vo. 1842.

THIS is one, out of several English works of established character, which the publishers of the city of Philadelphia have lately undertaken to reproduce in America. The mode in which this attempt has been executed, has its advantages. There is not, to be sure, any thing like the luxury in paper, printing, and engraving, displayed by them, that marks the editions that issue from the London press, and most particularly that of the Letters we now propose to consider ; but some compensation for the inferiority in these respects, is to be found in the great inferiority of price. The six volumes, into which the London copy is divided, are comprised in four, without material inconvenience to the reader, whilst the mechanical execution of them is not discreditable. It may be as much as we ought to expect at present in America, where individual fortunes are not large, and readers are many. So much new matter is daily issued from the press in the United States at very trifling cost, that it is of importance to the success of an effort to introduce standard works, that they should not be disproportionately expensive. In no country of the world are there probably so many readers, compared to the whole population, as in this ; but it may be doubted,

whether in any, is so great a part of the whole matter read, of an equally fleeting and perishable cast. If the booksellers of Philadelphia can in any degree substitute Lord Bacon, Sharon Turner, Horace Walpole, or even Lord Bolingbroke, in the room of cloudy metaphysics, infidel theology, disorganizing social theories, and fictitious histories of rogues and scoundrels, more dangerous than the real ones, then, we think, they will do a great benefit to American society. These are vigorous writers at least, and, although they are not of equal merit, nor to be indiscriminately recommended, they are thinkers, who will improve, whilst they exercise, the minds of all who read them.

No general collection of the letters of Horace Walpole has ever yet been made, which will at all compare in fulness with the present work. The correspondence with Lord Strafford, General Conway, and others, first appeared in the quarto edition of the works of the author, published in 1798, the year after his death; but these letters do not equal in interest the series addressed to Sir Horace Mann, since that time published under the editorial care of the late Lord Dover, or the letters to the Marquis of Hertford, which Mr. Croker gave to the world some years ago. In addition to all of these, the volumes before us contain a considerable number which have never before seen the light. The very lively Chapters of reminiscences, by the same writer, are also incorporated into them, so that, with the aid of a complete chronological arrangement, we now have, as is remarked in the preface, "a most interesting commentary on the events of the age, as well as a record of the most important transactions, invaluable to the historian and politician, from 1735 to 1797, a period of more than sixty years."

Sixty years of the historical events of Great Britain, described by an eyewitness of many of the transactions of which he speaks, and an acquaintance of most of the principal actors, might very naturally be expected to interest almost any one who loves to study history in any other shape rather than in that of a studied narrative, even though the pen that recorded them were a much less fascinating one than that of Horace Walpole. But when, added to the fact that he was the son of England's prime minister during a part of that time, and himself a member of Parliament, mixing in the scenes which he describes, we have the observations,

which he makes, conveyed to us with all the charm, that skill in this peculiar department of composition can throw over them, little appears to be wanting to give these letters a fair claim to the first rank in British literature. Walpole has been denominated "the prince of epistolary writers," and with justice, for we know of no one who presents so great a combination of claims to the title. The letters of Cowper often sparkle with the most genuine humor, but they also betray not infrequently the existence of that malady, which gives any feeling rather than pleasure to the association with his name. Besides, they turn somewhat too exclusively upon events in a very narrow circle of life. Lady Hesketh, and Mrs. Unwin, and the Reverend Mr. Newton, were doubtless excellent people, but we do not feel much interest in their doings and sayings, except so far as they connect themselves with the fate of the poor sufferer. Gray, on the other hand, is witty after a far more wholesome fashion ; but then his writing is somewhat infected with the scholarlike formalism of the college in which he passed his days. Pope wrote essays, but no letters ; whilst Chesterfield has infected his epistolary compositions with the pestiferous character of his morality. Lady Mary Wortley Montague has seemed to us to hold a high rank as a female letter-writer, only because there have not been many country-women of hers eager publicly to contest her claim. None of these writers can be compared with Horace Walpole, for he unites in himself the separate characteristics for which each of them is remarkable.

In truth, fame is a somewhat capricious thing. Horace Walpole was only the third son of one, who, for more than twenty years, was the centre of all political power in Great Britain, who maintained the house of Hanover on the throne, and who at last yielded only to about as formidable a political combination as ever was formed against any minister. He had none of his father's abilities, and, in the period of their joint lives, it may reasonably be doubted whether any individual would not have been pronounced mad, who should have foretold, that with posterity the leading statesman, who enjoyed the confidence of two successive monarchs, and before whom all men were bowing, with sentiments of hope or of fear, of open attachment or of secret enmity, would be little known in comparison with his younger son, of whom neither

he nor the world then made much account, a pensioned usher of the Exchequer, enjoying the profits of a sinecure which his father's power had obtained for him. The progress of time would, nevertheless, have proved such a statement, absurd as it might then have seemed to the worshippers of the idol of the hour, no more than the simple truth. The best chance which the father now has to be distinctly known, is in the writings of the son, in the very Letters now before us, even though these begin only at about the time when he was verging to his fall.

The fate of Sir Robert Walpole has been singular indeed. A combination of adverse and discordant political elements, directed for the most part by men having no upright motives of conduct, and instigated by one able but reckless and unprincipled agitator, finally succeeded, after a long and vehement struggle, in effecting his overthrow. And although the hour of their success was also the hour of their destruction, because their prosperity immediately loosed the only bond which had held them together, — although they immediately proved by their own conduct, when in place, the hollowness of the professions they had made whilst in opposition, — yet the very fact of their victory, momentary though it was, has nevertheless had the effect of fixing upon the memory of their common enemy, the lasting stigma of having been a statesman ruling only by arts of corruption. Even down to this time, and in the legislative halls of the United States, some men are found to rise and babble in every debate, about *corruption* and *Sir Robert Walpole*, as synonymous terms, exactly as if he had been the first and the last minister in all history, who had been known to resort to similar arts in order to sustain himself in power. And this is pretty nearly the sum of the knowledge that most people now have of a man, to whose laborious services Great Britain is indebted for having saved its people from long years of civil commotion ; to whom, almost alone, the present dynasty is indebted for the safe and peaceable transmission of the crown, through sire and son, down to the present holder, and under whose fostering care the commercial system, which has been the foundation of the great prosperity which that country has enjoyed, received its most stable form. Such is a striking example of the capri-

ciousness of earthly fame. No wonder, that Sir Robert himself called all history a lie.

In countries enjoying any share, however small, of popular government, there appear to be but two ways of effectively administering the public affairs ; one being by means of a broad and comprehensive policy, in carrying out which, the minister relies upon the goodness of his measures, as well as their success, for support ; and the other depending upon party attachments and a cautious and temporizing system of action. The most remarkable instance of the former is the administration of the elder Pitt, which, notwithstanding its brilliant success, lasted but for five years ; whilst Sir Robert Walpole carried on the latter system for more than twenty. Genius was the characteristic of Lord Chatham, whilst worldly wisdom belonged to Walpole. The first looked at measures entirely, and disregarded men ; the last studied men first, and then moulded his measures. Neither could have well filled the place of the other, at the time they were respectively ministers, and yet both effectively contributed, in turn, to the aggrandizement of their country. Chatham would never have had the patience necessary to keep up his favor with his German sovereign, as Walpole did by talking affairs in bad Latin with George the First ; neither would he, like him, have ruled his successor, by paying court to his Queen ; yet, if he had lost it, his conduct would then have gone far to shake, instead of confirming, the Brunswick hold upon the throne. So on the other hand, Walpole would never have ventured upon the bold system of waging war, which distinguished the policy of Chatham, and which had the effect of restoring Great Britain to the commanding position in European affairs from which she had been declining ever since the days of Marlborough. One was great in the management of domestic affairs in times of peace, whilst the other was great as an instrument to conduct her foreign relations in time of war. The two may stand as types of their respective classes, very opposite in all their qualities, but great in those which peculiarly belonged to them.

There is much in the history of Walpole's administration well worthy of attentive study upon this side of the water, because, with our peculiar institutions, it is likely that we shall have many ministers of his stamp, for one made after the pattern of Lord Chatham. It was Burke who first ob-

served the fact, that his system of government was that of party attachments and rigid political discipline. Walpole was a politician, soul and body. He had neither taste nor inclination for any other pursuit. His happiness consisted in the possession of power, and his natural home was to be found only in the House of Commons. But he had a clear head, a calculating heart, a mind not overburdened with troublesome scruples of morality, and a thorough contempt for all men, but most particularly for the agents whom he was perpetually setting in motion. The first quality made him a financier at the moment when the South Sea bubble had thrown every thing into confusion, and to his success in then restoring order he owed his eminence ; whilst the others enabled him, for many years, to maintain it against a combination of every thing that could be brought to bear against him except sound moral principle. The arts of corruption he does not appear to have resorted to more freely than his contemporaries, although the common opinion fixes the odium of using them peculiarly upon him. He appears to have been guiltless of all the dishonest methods of enriching himself, which stamp his predecessor Sunderland with infamy. His principle of conduct was to promote the best interests of his country, so far as he could consistently with the safety of his position, but never to sacrifice his power merely for the sake of an opinion. This drove him into a war, although he disapproved it, only because the people cried out for it, and it forced him to recede from many steps which he felt to be right, merely because they appeared to be unpopular. Of the peculiar moral force which attaches to a character for integrity and uprightness of conduct, considered as an instrument for advancing great ends, he seems to have had little idea, but relied solely for support upon what he supposed to be self-interest in men. The consequence was, that he was faithfully served so long as his power appeared secure ; but, when that began to crumble, the bond no longer held its force. As soon as the opposition was perceived to be in a situation strong enough to be likely to make good what it promised, there ceased to be any inducement to follow the minister. And not until after his overthrow did it happen, that the character of the opposition to him developed itself. Had he sustained himself, it might have come down to this day, as the emblem of patriotic and virtuous

resistance to corruption. Its success fully verified the words of one of its greatest and most unprincipled leaders, which are too memorable in themselves, not to deserve to be always quoted on this topic.

"I expect little," said Lord Bolingbroke, "from the principal actors, that tread the stage at present. They are divided, not so much as it has seemed, and as they would have it believed, about measures; the true division is about their different ends. Whilst the minister was not hard pushed, nor the prospect of succeeding to him near, they appeared to have but one end, the reformation of the government. The destruction of the minister was pursued only as a preliminary, but of essential and indispensable necessity to that end. But, when his destruction seemed to approach, the object of his succession interposed to the sight of many; and the reformation of the government was no longer their point of view. They divided the skin, at least in their thoughts, before they had taken the beast, and the common fear of hunting him down for others made them all faint in the chase. It was this, and this alone, that has saved him or has put off his evil day. Corruption, so much and so justly complained of, could not have done it alone."

What Lord Bolingbroke himself meant by a reformation of the government, is not entirely certain. If put to the test, he would not in all probability have carried it much further, than to take off the disqualification under which he was lying from all personal agency in the management of public affairs. But the revolution, when it happened, did not secure him even this boon. Walpole, like a consummate tactician as he was, knew how to deprive his enemies of the fruits of their victory, even at the very moment of their triumph; whilst he exposed most fully to the world the true nature of their motives of action. The adherents of the exiled family, who, out of the whole combination, had been the most zealous in their hostility, as they supposed they had the most important purposes to serve by its success, reaped the least reward of all from their exertions. The fruitless rebellion of 1745 conclusively proved, that Sir Robert was no longer so necessary as they had supposed to the security of the throne. He died before it took place.

We have gathered the clearest notions we have of the character of this minister, from the writings of his son, who appears to have been a devoted friend, yet a not undiscern-

ing judge. He came upon the stage at a very late period of the minister's career, it is true, but early enough to understand the motives of all the principal actors, and the nature of the machinery which they set in motion to gain their ends. The impressions thus early received remained with him through life, and dashed his observation of men and manners with a bitterness, for which it has been his lot to be severely censured by almost all the critics of his writings. Horace Walpole was not probably by nature amiable, according to the ordinary understanding of the term ; but we think it was his position more than his temperament, which made him so severe a judge. His father had told him, that it was lucky not many men could be prime ministers, for the view of human nature which the position presented was any thing but edifying or improving. And he himself enjoyed, even in his situation, too many glimpses of the reality not to feel that there was substantial justice in the remark. How can it then be supposed, that he in after life, when discussing the conduct of such men as the Duke of Newcastle, Mr. Pelham, Lords Bath, Granville, Chesterfield, and Halifax, Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, Lord Hardwicke, Lord Mansfield, Doddington, and his other contemporaries, should be perfectly free from bias, or that he should not, from his personal knowledge of so much that was not creditable to many of them, occasionally cherish groundless suspicions and believe ill-founded charges against them all ?

The unfriendly spirit, in which the writings of Horace Walpole have been treated in Great Britain, doubtless has its origin in the fact, that the descendants of great numbers of persons satirized by him, live to feel the severity of his strictures upon their ancestors, whilst he himself left no one behind him of his own blood to take offence at reproaches cast upon his memory. Reviewing is seldom a perfectly impartial business, where the passions of powerful contemporaries are still alive to affect favorably or otherwise the judgment, or perhaps even the interests, of the reviewer. Horace Walpole attacked parties, and he attacked individuals. In doing so, he has often told more truth than the world would otherwise perhaps have ever known, but he has occasionally committed mistakes and done injustice. Where this has happened, most of his commentators have been in the habit of pouncing upon him with much fury, and of endeavouring to invalidate

the authority of all his statements, by proving the inaccuracy of some of them. They have treated him as if he were a writer of history, and bound to weigh his assertions, and not a mere narrator of his own impressions, who leaves to the reader the business of judging of their accuracy. The smallest observation will show at once, that he is not to be implicitly trusted as a guide to the history of his own time ; but that he must be admitted as a witness with more confidence, for the very reason that he appears to take so little pains to conceal the strength of his prejudices, and to mislead as to the defects of his own character.

Let his critics say what they will, his letters will outlive all the severity which they can apply to him. We do not say the same thing of his "*Memoires of the last Ten Years of George the Second,*" which, with some very spirited passages, appears to us a heavy performance, and which, after all, contains little that does not also appear in the Correspondence. Walpole had a tenacious memory, and strengthened it by often repeating his impressions. He suffered no anecdote to fade from his recollection for want of use. We will not venture to say, for example, how often he mentions the country gentleman, who was met when riding out on a fox-chase in the immediate vicinity of the battle of Edgehill, in connexion with his indifference to political affairs. Yet he was not indifferent to them, and it would have been very unnatural in him if he had been. How could a young man with any share of ability fail to attach himself to the scenes in which he was born and brought up ? He did not like to confess the feeling, because he soon discovered that he was not calculated to shine in Parliament, and he was willing to conceal his unfitness under the guise of indifference. This doubtless justifies the charge of affectation, which has been brought against him on account of his frequent professions upon the subject ; but, if it was affectation, we think the circumstances attending it made it more than commonly pardonable. Walpole gave up the business of a politician without giving up his interest in the conduct of political men ; and it is owing to this peculiarity, that we have so much of valuable anecdote in his letters, instead of dull political essays. Whatever change this may make in our opinion of the writer, it marvellously increases our interest in what he has written. Besides, he has a charming way of his own of

telling his stories. They never want for point in the drawing up. His pictures are scenes from the life, in which you at once recognise the air and the motion, the external act, and the internal motive, of the actors. Take, for example, his account of his very first year in Parliament. It was a memorable season to him, for it was the period when the last struggle between his father and the opposition was going on. We will extract from a series of his letters to his friend, Sir Horace Mann, at Florence, those passages which describe it.

“ Somerset House, (for I write to you wherever
I find myself,) Dec 10, 1741.

“ I have got no letter from you yet ; the post should have brought it yesterday. The Gazette says, that the Cardinal [Fleury] has declared, that they will suffer no expedition against Tuscany. I wish he had told me ! If they preserve this guarantee, personally, I can forgive their breaking the rest. But I long for your letter ; every letter now from each of us is material. You will be almost as impatient to hear of the Parliament, as I of Florence. The Lords on Friday went upon the King’s speech ; Lord Chesterfield made a very fine speech against the address, all levelled at the house of Hanover. Lord Cholmondeley, they say, answered him well. Lord Halifax spoke very ill, and was answered by little Lord Raymond, who always will answer him. Your friend, Lord Sandwich, affronted his Grace of Grafton extremely, who was ill and sat out of his place, by calling him to order ; it was indecent in such a boy, to a man of his age and rank ; the blood of Fitzroy will not easily pardon it. The court had a majority of forty-one with some converts.

“ On Tuesday, we had the Speech ; there were great differences among the party ; the Jacobites, with Shippen* and Lord Noel Somerset at their head, were for a division, Pultney and the Patriots against one ; the ill success in the House of Lords had frightened them ; we had no division, but a very warm battle between Sir R. and Pultney. The latter made a fine speech, very personal, on the state of affairs. Sir R., with as much health, as much spirits, as much force and command as ever, answered him for an hour ; said, ‘ He had long been taxed with

“ * Honest Will Shippen,” as he was called, or “ Downright Shippen,” as Pope terms him, was a zealous Jacobite member of Parliament, possessed of considerable talents, and a vehement opposer of Sir Robert Walpole’s government. He, however, did justice to that able minister, for he was accustomed to say, “ Robin and I are honest men ; but as for those fellows in long periwigs, (meaning the Tories of the day,) they only want to get into office themselves.” [Note, by Lord Dover.]

all our misfortunes; but did he raise the war in Germany? or advise the war with Spain? did he kill the late Emperor or King of Prussia? did he counsel this King? or was he first minister to the King of Poland? did he kindle the war betwixt Muscovy and Sweden?' For our troubles at home, he said, 'All the grievances of this nation were owing to the Patriots.' They laughed much at this; but does he want proofs of it? He said, 'They talked much of an equilibrium in this Parliament, and of what they designed against him; if it was so, the sooner he knew it the better; and therefore, if any man would move for a day to examine the state of the nation, he would second it.' Mr. Pultney did move for it; Sir R. did second it, and it is fixed for the twenty-first of January. Sir R. repeated some words of Lord Chesterfield's, in the House of Lords, that this was *a time for truth, for plain truth, for English truth*, and hinted at the reception* his lordship had met in France. After these speeches of such consequence, and from such men, Mr. Lyttleton got up to justify, or rather to flatter, Lord Chesterfield, though everybody then had forgot that he had been mentioned. Danvers, who is a rough, rude beast, but now and then mouths out some humor, said, 'that Mr. P. and Sir R. were like two old bawds, debauching young members.'

"That day was a day of triumph, but yesterday, (Wednesday,) the streamers of victory did not fly so gallantly. It was the day of receiving petitions; Mr. Pultney presented an immense piece of parchment, which he said he could but just lift; it was the Westminster petition, and is to be heard next Tuesday, when we shall all have our brains knocked out by the mob; so if you don't hear from me next post, you will conclude my head was a little out of order. After this, we went upon a Cornish petition presented by Sir William Yonge, which drew on a debate and a division, when lo! we were but 222 to 215, — how do you like a majority of seven? The opposition triumphs highly, and with reason; one or two such victories, as Pyrrhus, the member for Macedon, said, will be the ruin of us. I look upon it now, that the question is, Downing Street or the Tower; will you come and see a body, if one should happen to lodge at the latter? There are a thousand pretty things to amuse you; the lions, the armoury, the crown, and the axe that beheaded

"* Lord Chesterfield had been sent by the party, in the preceding September, to France, to request the Duke of Ormond (at Avignon) to obtain the Pretender's order to the Jacobites, to vote against Sir R. W. upon any question whatever; many of them having either voted for him, or retired, on the famous motion the last year, for removing him from the King's councils."

Anna Bullen. I design to make interest for the room where the two princes were smothered; in long winter evenings, when one wants company, (for I don't suppose that many people will frequent me then,) one may sit and scribble verses against Crouch-backed Richard, and dirges on the sweet babes. If I die there, and have my body thrown into a wood, I am too old to be buried by robin redbreasts, am not I?

"Bootle,* the prince's chancellor, made a most long and stupid speech; afterwards, Sir R. called to him, 'Brother Bootle, take care you don't get my old name.' 'What's that?' 'Blunderer.'" — Vol. i. pp. 194–196.

The opposition which Sir Robert had to contend with, was made up of three divisions; first, the friends of the Prince of Wales, who was then upon very ill terms with his father, George the Second; secondly, the Jacobites, who had not yet abandoned all hope of the restoration of the Stuarts; and lastly, the *patriots*, as they were called, or friends of reform, among whom was ranked Pultney, the great rival of the Minister in the House of Commons. Walpole, until the period when this letter was written, had been able to hold them all at bay, first by possessing the confidence of the King, secondly, by the possession of power which he made effective in sustaining party discipline, and, lastly, by his skill and tact in disturbing the movements arranged against him. At the very close of the Parliament preceding the one now in question, he had completely succeeded in defeating the motion for an address to the King to remove him, the great engine of the opposition at that time, by nursing the dissensions which were at all times rankling among its members. It was in the course of his speech in his own defence, the substance of which is given by his biographer Coxe, that he deals with the patriotic division of his opponents after the following fashion.

"Gentlemen have talked a great deal of patriotism. A venerable word when duly practised. But I am sorry to say, that of late it has been so much hackneyed about, that it is in danger of falling into disgrace; the very idea of true patriotism is lost, and the term has been prostituted to the very worst of purposes. A patriot, Sir! why patriots spring up like mushrooms!

* "Sir Thomas Bootle, chancellor to the Prince of Wales; a dull, heavy man, and who is therefore ironically called by Sir C. H. Williams, 'Bright Bootle.'"

I could raise fifty of them within the four and twenty hours. I have raised many of them in one night. It is but refusing to gratify an unreasonable or an insolent demand, and up starts a patriot. I have never been afraid of making patriots, but I disdain and despise all their efforts. But this pretended virtue proceeds from personal malice and from disappointed ambition. There is not a man amongst them, whose particular aim I am not able to ascertain, and from what motive they have entered into the lists of opposition."

This was speaking boldly, but the result proved that he did not speak entirely without knowledge. The patriotism of Pultney vanished before the empty vision of a coronet, which his rival, when overthrown, induced the King to hold before his eyes. The rival orators ascended to the House of Lords at about the same time; and Sir Robert consoled himself for the exclusion from the royal closet to which he was now doomed, by the knowledge that he had effectually turned the key of its door against his opponent also. No public man ever fell in Great Britain so immediately in the public estimation, and so irrecoverably, as did Pultney, by the mere acceptance of a peerage. The fact is, that in doing so, he proved the truth of the boast made by Walpole, in the extract we have quoted, of his own penetration. The Patriots obtained a share of the spoils of victory on the condition of leaving the rest of the opposition to shift for themselves. They accepted the terms, and convinced the public that the charge, which the minister had made against them, was well founded.

Human nature is much the same all over the world. There may be hollow professions of patriotism in America, as well as elsewhere. That is what makes the history of this great struggle interesting to us. Let us now follow it another step, in the next letter addressed to Sir Horace Mann.

"Wednesday night, eleven o'clock, Dec. 16, 1741.
Remember this day.

"*Nous voilà de la Minorité ! entens-tu cela ? hé !* My dear child, since you will have these ugly words explained, they just mean, that we are metamorphosed into the minority. This was the night of choosing a chairman of the committee of elections. Gyles Earle (as in the two last Parliaments) was named by the Court; Dr. Lee, a civilian, by the opposition, a man of a fair character. Earle was formerly a dependent on the Duke of

Argyle, is of remarkable covetousness and wit, which he has dealt out largely against the Scotch and the Patriots. It was a day of much expectation, and both sides had raked together all probabilities; I except near twenty, who are in town, but stay to vote on a second question, when the majority may be decided to either party. Have you not read of such in story? Men, who would not care to find themselves on the weaker side, contrary to their intent. In short, the determined sick were dragged out of their beds; zeal came in a great coat. There were two vast dinners at two taverns, for either party; at six we met in the House. Sir William Yonge, seconded by my uncle Horace, moved for Mr. Earle; Sir Paul Methuen and Sir Watkyn Williams Wynne proposed Dr. Lee, — and carried him, by a majority of four; 242 against 238, the greatest number, I believe, that ever *lost* a question. You have no idea of their huzza! unless you can conceive, how people must triumph after defeats for twenty years together. We had one vote shut out, by coming a moment too late; one that quitted us, for having been ill used by the Duke of Newcastle, but yesterday; for which, in all probability, he will use him well to-morrow, — I mean, for quitting us. Sir Thomas Lowther, Lord Hartington's uncle, was fetched down by him, and voted against us. Young Ross, son to a commissioner of the customs, and saved from the dishonor of not liking to go to the West Indies when it was his turn, by Sir R.'s giving him a lieutenancy, voted against us; and Tom Hervey, who is always with us, but is quite mad; and being asked why he left us, replied, 'Jesus knows my thoughts; one day I blaspheme, and pray the next.' So, you see what accidents were against us, or we had carried our point. They cry, Sir R. miscalculated; how should he calculate, when there are men like Ross, and fifty others he could name! It was not very pleasant to be stared in the face, to see how one bore it; you can guess at my bearing it, who interest myself so little about any thing. I have had a taste of what I am to meet from all sorts of people. The moment we had lost the question, I went from the heat of the House into the Speaker's chamber, and there were some fifteen others of us; an under doorkeeper thought a question was new put, when it was not, and, without giving us notice, clapped the door to. I asked him how he dared lock us out, without calling us; he replied insolently, 'It was his duty, and he would do it again;' one of the party went to him, commended him, and told him, he should be punished if he acted otherwise. Sir R. is in great spirits, and still sanguine. I have so little experience, that I shall not be amazed at whatever scenes follow. My dear child, we have triumphed twenty years; is it strange, that for-

tune should at last forsake us ; or ought we not always to expect it, especially in this kingdom ? They talk loudly of the year forty-one, and promise themselves all the confusions that began a hundred years ago from the same date. I hope they prognosticate wrong ; but, should it be so, I can be happy in other places. One reflection I shall have very sweet, though very melancholy ; that, if our family is to be the sacrifice that shall first pamper discord, at least the one,* the part of it that interested all my concerns, and must have suffered from our ruin, is safe, secure, and above the rage of confusion ; nothing in this world can touch her peace now !

“ To-morrow and Friday we go upon the Westminster election ; you will not wonder, shall you, if you hear next post, that we have lost that too ? Good night.

“ Yours ever.”

— Vol. I. pp. 197–199.

The minister lost the Westminster members by 220 to 216, as is related in the next letter, which we would give if we had room, and then an adjournment took place for three weeks. He was not, however, yet in despair, but determined after the holidays to renew the fight. One more letter furnishes the result.

“ Friday, Jan. 22, 1742.

“ Don’t wonder that I missed writing to you yesterday, my constant day ; you will pity me, when you hear that I was shut up in the House of Commons, till one in the morning. I came away more dead than alive, and was forced to leave Sir R. at supper with my brothers ; he was all alive, and in spirits. He says, he is younger than me, and indeed, I think so ; in spite of his forty years more. My head aches to-night, but we rose early ; and, if I don’t write to-night, when shall I find a moment to spare ? Now you want to know what we did last night ; stay, I will tell you presently, in its place ; it was well, and of infinite consequence, so far I tell you now.

“ Our recess finished last Monday, and never at school did I enjoy holidays so much ; but, *les voilà finis jusqu’ au printemps !* Tuesday (for you see I write you an absolute journal) we sat on a Scotch election, a double return ; their man was Hume Campbell, Lord Marchmont’s brother, lately made solicitor to the Prince, for being as troublesome, as violent, and almost as able, as his brother. They made a great point of it, and gained so many of our votes, that, at ten at night, we were forced to give it up without dividing. Sandys, who loves persecution,

* * His mother, Catherine, Lady Walpole, who died August 20th, 1737.”

even unto the death, moved to punish the sheriff; and, as we dared not divide, they ordered him into custody, where, by this time, I suppose Sandys has eaten him.

“On Wednesday, Sir Robert Godschall, the Lord Mayor, presented the merchants’ petition, signed by three hundred of them, and drawn up by Leonidas Glover. This is to be heard next Wednesday. This gold-chain came into Parliament, cried up for his parts, but proves so dull, one would think he chewed opium. Earle says, ‘I have heard an oyster speak as well twenty times.’

“Well, now I come to *yesterday*; we met, not expecting much business. Five of our members were gone to the York election, and the three Lords Beauclercs, to their mother’s funeral at Windsor; for that old beauty, St. Albans, is dead at last. On this they depended for getting the majority, and towards three o’clock, when we thought of breaking up, poured in their most violent questions; one was, a motion for leave to bring in the place bill, to limit the number of placemen in the House. This was not opposed, because, out of decency, it is generally suffered to pass the Commons, and is thrown out by the Lords; only Colonel Cholmondeley desired to know, if they designed to limit the number of those that have promises of places, as well as of those that have places now. I must tell you, that we are a very conclave; they buy votes with reversions of places on the change of the ministry. Lord Gage was giving an account in Tone’s coffee-house, of the intended alterations; that Mr. Pultney is to be chancellor of the Exchequer, and Chesterfield and Carteret secretaries of state. Somebody asked, who was to be paymaster? Numps Edwin, who stood by, replied, ‘We have not thought so low as that yet.’ Lord Gage harangues every day at Tone’s, and has read there a very false account of the King’s message to the Prince.* The Court, to show their contempt of Gage, have given their copy to be read by Swinny.† This is the authentic copy, which they have made the Bishop write from the message which he carried, and as he and Lord Cholmondeley agree it was given.

“* During the holidays, Sir R. W. had prevailed on the King to send to the Prince of Wales, to offer to pay his debts and double his allowance. This negotiation was intrusted to Lord Cholmondeley on the King’s, and to Secker, Bishop of Oxford, on the Prince’s side; but came to nothing. (The Prince, in his answer, stated, that ‘he could not come to court while Sir Robert Walpole presided in his Majesty’s councils; that he looked on him as the sole author of our grievances at home, and of our ill success in the West Indies; and that the disadvantageous figure we at present made in all the courts of Europe, was to be attributed alone to him.’)”

“† Owen Mac Swinny, a buffoon; formerly director of the play-house.”

“On this Thursday, of which I was telling you, at three o'clock, Mr. Pultney rose up, and moved for a secret committee of twenty-one. This inquisition, this council of ten, was to sit and examine whatever persons and papers they should please, and to meet when and where they pleased. He protested much on its not being intended against *any person*, but merely to give the King advice, and on this foot they fought it till ten at night, when Lord Perceval blundered out what they had been cloaking with so much art, and declared that he should vote for it as a committee of accusation. Sir Robert immediately rose, and protested that he should not have spoken, but for what he had heard last; but that now he must take it to himself. He portrayed the malice of the opposition, who, for twenty years, had not been able to touch him, and were now reduced to this infamous shift. He defied them to accuse him, and only desired that, if they should, it might be in an open and fair manner; desired no favor, but to be acquainted with his accusation. He spoke of Mr. Doddington, who had called his administration infamous, as of a person of great self-mortification, who, for sixteen years, had condescended to bear part of the odium. For Mr. Pultney, who had just spoken a second time, Sir R. said, he had begun the debate with great calmness, but give him his due, he had made amends for it in the end. In short, never was innocence so triumphant!

“There were several glorious speeches on both sides; Mr. Pultney's two, W. Pitt's and George Grenville's, Sir Robert's, Sir W. Yonge's, Harry Fox's, Mr. Chute's, and the Attorney-General's. My friend Coke, for the first time, spoke vastly well, and mentioned how great Sir Robert's character is abroad. Sir Francis Dashwood replied, that he had found quite the reverse from Mr. Coke, and that foreigners always spoke with contempt of the Chevalier de Walpole. This was going too far, and he was called to order, but got off well enough, by saying, that he knew it was contrary to rule to name any member, but that he only mentioned it as spoken by an impertinent Frenchman.

“But of all speeches, none ever was so full of wit as Mr. Pultney's last. He said, ‘I have heard this committee represented as a most dreadful spectre; it has been likened to all terrible things; it has been likened to the King; to the inquisition; it will be a committee of safety; it is a committee of danger; I don't know what it is to be! One gentleman, I think, called it *a cloud*! (this was the Attorney,) *a cloud*! I remember Hamlet takes Lord Polonius by the hand and shows him *a cloud*, and then asks him if he does not think it is like a whale.’

Well, in short, at eleven at night we divided, and threw out this famous committee by 253 to 250, the greatest number that ever was in the House, and the greatest number that ever *lost* a question.

"It was a most shocking sight to see the sick and dead brought in on both sides! Men on crutches, and Sir William Gordon* from his bed, with a blister on his head, and flannel hanging out from under his wig. I could scarce pity him, for his ingratitude. The day before the Westminster petition, Sir Charles Wager† gave his son a ship, and the next day the father came down and voted against him. The son has since been cast away; but they concealed it from the father, that he might not absent himself. However, as we have our good-natured men too on our side, one of his own countrymen went and told him of it in the House. The old man, who looked like Lazarus at his resuscitation, bore it with great resolution, and said, he knew *why* he was told of it, but when he thought his country in danger he would not go away. As he is so near death, that it is indifferent to him whether he died two thousand years ago or to-morrow, it is unlucky for him not to have lived when such insensibility would have been a Roman virtue.‡

"There are no arts, no menaces, which the opposition do not practise. They have threatened one gentleman, to have a reversion cut off from his son unless he will vote with them. To Totness there came a letter to the Mayor from the Prince, and signed by two of his lords, to recommend a candidate in opposition to the Solicitor-General. The Mayor sent the letter to Sir Robert. They have turned the Scotch to the best account. There is a young Oswald, who had engaged to Sir R. but has voted against us. Sir R. sent a friend to reproach him; the moment the gentleman who had engaged for him came into the room, Oswald said, 'You had like to have led me into a fine error! Did you not tell me, that Sir R. would have the majority?'"

"* Sir Robert Wilmot, in a letter to the Duke of Devonshire, says: 'Sir William Gordon was brought in like a corpse. Some thought it had been an old woman in disguise, having a white cloth round his head; others, who found him out, expected him to expire every moment. Other incurables were introduced on their side. Mr. Hopton, for Hereford, was carried in on crutches. Sir Robert Walpole exceeded himself. Mr. Pelham, with the greatest decency, cut Pultney into a thousand pieces. Sir Robert actually dissected him, and laid his heart open to the view of the House.'—E."

"† Admiral Sir Charles Wager. He had been knighted by Queen Anne, for his gallantry in taking and destroying some rich Spanish galleons. He was at this time first lord of the admiralty. He died in 1743." [Note, by Lord Dover.]

"‡ Sir William died in the May following."

“ When the debate was over, Mr. Pultney owned that he had never heard so fine a debate on our side ; and said to Sir Robert, ‘ Well, nobody can do what you can ! ’ ‘ Yes,’ replied Sir R., ‘ Yonge did better.’ Mr. P. answered, ‘ It was fine, but not of that weight with what you said.’ They all allow it ; and now their plan is to persuade Sir Robert to retire with honor. All that evening there was a report about the town, that he and my uncle were to be sent to the Tower, and people hired windows in the city to see them pass by ; but for this time I believe we shall not exhibit so historical a parade.

“ The night of the committee, my brother Walpole * had got two or three invalids at his house, designing to carry them into the House, as they were too ill to go round by Westminster Hall ; the patriots, who have rather more contrivances than their predecessors of Grecian and Roman memory, had taken the precaution of stopping the keyhole with sand. How Livy’s eloquence would have been hampered, if there had been back-doors and keyholes to the Temple of Concord.

“ A few days ago there were lists of the officers at Port Mahon laid before the House of Lords ; unfortunately it appeared, that two thirds of the regiment had been absent. The Duke of Argyll said, ‘ such a list was a libel on the government ’ ; and, of all men, the Duke of Newcastle was the man, who rose up and agreed with him. Remember what I told you, once before, of his union with Carteret. We have carried the York election by a majority of 956.” — Vol. I. pp. 212–217.

A majority of three upon such a question, was equivalent to defeat. The next question, upon a contested election, was carried against the minister, by a majority of sixteen, and his friends then interfered to advise him to retire. He did so, as Coxe his biographer states, very reluctantly ; and thus ended the most vehement and long-continued party struggle, that has happened in English history since the expulsion of the Stuarts, and the establishment of the power of the House of Commons. The names of most of the actors have long ceased to excite any interest on their own account, but the scene was much the same with what goes on now, with only the variation of a new set of performers. It is at this day, too often, as it was then, a simple question of ins and outs, with very little to choose between them. And if we

“ * Robert, Lord Walpole, afterwards Earl of Orford. He was auditor of the Exchequer, and his house joined to the House of Commons, to which he had a door ; but it was soon after locked up, by an order of the House.”

had a second Horace Walpole now alive, on either side of the Atlantic, to sketch with as vivid a pencil what he saw, as the first one has, we doubt whether he would make much alteration in the picture.

Before dismissing this part of the subject, however, it may be worth while to remark upon two or three circumstances alluded to in these letters. One is the severity of party discipline, by which individuals holding office, or being under obligation to the minister, as in the case of Ross, and in that of Sir William Gordon, are held up to censure for acting against him. This was one principle of Walpole's system of government, to admit no difference of opinion among those who looked to him as their leader. It was perhaps carried so far as to prove the cause of his ruin. He never rested content whilst there was a rival, or any man who threatened to be a rival, within reach of the throne. He got rid of Pultney, Lord Carteret, Chesterfield, and even his brother-in-law, Viscount Townsend, in order to be sole minister. And he preferred selecting his officers from the lower classes in many cases, to placing greater power in the hands of the aristocracy. The consequence was, that his action strengthened the common interest of opposition among the discontented, whilst it made even his adherents impatient of the yoke he put upon them. When the moment of trial came, he found himself more embarrassed by secret treachery than by the attacks of his avowed enemies. This will explain the extreme harshness with which Horace Walpole speaks throughout his works of the Duke of Newcastle, and of Lord Hardwicke, some slight specimen of which, as to the first named, may be found in the letters we have extracted. Of his unfaithfulness there can be little doubt. Something may be said in defence of the other ; but it is perfectly certain that he had, for some time before the fall of Walpole, differed with him most especially as to the policy which had been adopted towards the Prince of Wales, and this difference could not have failed to bring on his retirement, had Walpole sustained himself. When therefore he appears in company with Newcastle, as a negotiator with Pultney, and these two are found to retain their places, by sacrificing Walpole and buying off the opposition of Pultney and the Prince's party, it is difficult to resist the conviction, that our author's suspicion of treachery was in the two cases equally well founded.

Such are the vicissitudes, such the mishaps, to which political life in every country is subject, that no minister who has enjoyed the highest situations, ought to be dejected at the loss of them. Yet it has seldom happened that any one has submitted with equanimity to the change. Sir Robert did not live long enough after his fall, to show to the world very clearly the effect which it produced upon him. After some little vacillation, the reins of government fell into the hands of Henry Pelham, and his brother the Duke of Newcastle, who enjoyed for years an uninterrupted control of large majorities in both houses of Parliament, with perhaps as moderate a portion of ability in the administration, as has existed at any time in England since the Revolution. It is the characteristic of great capacity in high political station to arouse and combine against itself numbers of men in opposition, whilst moderate abilities in the same often encounter little or no resistance. It also sometimes happens, that the succession of the latter, after years of stormy violence against the former, produces an astonishing degree of calm over the surface of affairs. The Pelhams appear to have enjoyed all these advantages. The system of party discipline, which had been drawn up too tightly under Walpole, they relaxed, until it became not uncommon for members of the government to be found opposing the measures of the minister in the House of Commons. And yet there has seldom been so little of party division as during this time. Henry Pelham died in office, a respectable, if he was not a great man ; yet even his brother, the Duke of Newcastle, far his inferior in all respects, still managed to carry on the government until the year 1756, when Mr. Pitt drove him from the helm. However easy it might have been for him to keep on in the ordinary course of affairs at home, he could not prevent his incapacity from manifesting itself, when the country became involved in war with foreign nations. He was better versed in the system of representation in Parliament and the control of rotten boroughs, than in geography or history. When General Ligonier hinted to him the necessity of defending Annapolis, he replied, " Annapolis, Annapolis ! O ! yes, Annapolis must be defended : to be sure, Annapolis should be defended. — Where is Annapolis ? " It was reserved for the genius of Pitt to show to men of similar calibre, that the way to conquer France was to direct a little more attention to the geography of America.

We have already remarked, that it is not safe to rely entirely upon the authority of Horace Walpole in forming our opinions of any of his contemporaries, but most particularly of those among them against whom he had, or thought he had, any cause of complaint. His style is almost always caustic, and every sentence of it relating to others has the point of an epigram. But he does not appear to have so written for the sake of showing how skilfully he could do it, as many have done, particularly among the French writers. It was rather the natural manifestation of his own habits of thought, which led him to decide unfavorably upon the conduct of all men, in every case that was susceptible of ambiguous construction. He cherished two distinct classes of vindictive feelings ; one of them on account of real or supposed injuries done to his father, the other, upon quarrels of his own. And, as the progress of time shows the softening and gradual removal of the former class from his memory, it has the effect of throwing into bolder relief the virulence of the latter. Walpole took an eager interest in politics whilst his father was alive, because that father was a leader in them ; and, after his death, he followed them, not from any attachment to some particular system of measures to which he gave his support, but because it amused him to watch the intrigues of the great and to comment upon them. He himself tells us, that, upon the happening of any extraordinary event, the first question his friend Bentley would expect to hear from him was, *Would it make a party ?* Doubtless these qualities are not likely to constitute an impartial historian, but they make a fascinating letter-writer, and in this light alone ought we to consider him. What can be better in its way, for instance, than the following letter, written to Sir Horace Mann, in the midst of the consternation occasioned by the rebellion of 1745 ?

“ Arlington Street, Nov. 22, 1745.

“ For these two days we have been expecting news of a battle. Wade marched last Saturday from Newcastle, and must have got up with the rebels if they stayed for him ; though the roads are exceedingly bad, and great quantities of snow have fallen. But last night there was some notice of a body of rebels being advanced to Penryth. We were put into great spirits by an heroic letter from the Mayor of Carlisle, who had fired on the rebels and made them retire ; he concluded with saying,

‘And so I think the town of Carlisle has done his Majesty more service than the great city of Edinburgh, or than all Scotland together.’ But this hero, who was grown the whole fashion for four and twenty hours, had chosen to stop all other letters. The King spoke of him at his *levée* with great encomiums; Lord Stair said, ‘Yes, Sir, Mr. Patterson has behaved very bravely.’ The Duke of Bedford interrupted him; ‘My lord, his name is not *Paterson*; that is a Scotch name; his name is *Patinson*.’ But, alack! the next day the rebels returned, having placed the women and children of the country in wagons in front of their army, and forcing the peasants to fix the scaling ladders. The great Mr. Patinson or Paterson (for now his name may be which one pleases) instantly surrendered the town, and agreed to pay two thousand pounds to save it from pillage. Well! then we were assured, that the citadel could hold out seven or eight days; but did not so many hours. On mustering the militia, there were not found above four men in a company; and for two companies, which the ministry, on a report of Lord Albermarle, who said they were to be sent from Wade’s army, thought were there, and did not know were not there, there was nothing but two of invalids. Colonel Durand, the governor, fled, because he would not sign the capitulation, by which the garrison, it is said, has sworn never to bear arms against the House of Stuart. The Colonel sent two expresses, one to Wade, and another to Ligonier, at Preston; but the latter was playing at whist with Lord Harrington, at Petersham. Such is our diligence and attention! All my hopes are in Wade, who was so sensible of the ignorance of our governors, that he refused to accept the command, till they consented that he should be subject to no kind of orders from hence. The rebels are reckoned up to thirteen thousand; Wade marches with about twelve; but if they come southward, the other army will probably be to fight them; the Duke [of Cumberland] is to command it, and sets out next week with another brigade of Guards, and Ligonier under him. There are great apprehensions for Chester, from the Flintshire-men, who are ready to rise. A quartermaster, first sent to Carlisle, was seized and carried to Wade; he behaved most insolently, and, being asked by the General, how many the rebels were, replied ‘Enough to beat any army you have in England.’ A Mackintosh has been taken, who reduces their formidability, by being sent to raise two clans, and with orders, if they would not rise, at least to give out they had risen, for that three clans would leave the Pretender, unless joined by those two. Five hundred new rebels are arrived at Perth, where our prisoners are kept.

“I had this morning a subscription book brought me for our parish ; Lord Granville had refused to subscribe. This is in the style of his friend Lord Bath, who has absented himself whenever any act of authority was to be executed against the rebels.

“Five Scotch lords are going to raise regiments *à l’Anglaise* ! resident in London, while the rebels were in Scotland ; they are to receive military emoluments for their neutrality !

“The Fox man-of-war, of 20 guns, is lost off Dunbar. One Beaver, the captain, has done us notable service ; the Pretender sent to commend his zeal and activity, and to tell him, that if he would return to his allegiance, he should soon have a flag. Beaver replied, ‘He never treated with any but principals ; that if the Pretender would come on board him, he would talk with him.’ I must now tell you of our great Vernon ; without once complaining to the ministry, he has written to Sir John Philipps, a distinguished Jacobite, to complain of want of provisions ; yet they do not venture to recall him ! Yesterday they had another baiting from Pitt, who is ravenous for the place of Secretary at War ; they would give it him ; but, as a preliminary, he insists on a declaration of our having nothing to do with the continent. He mustered his forces, but did not notify his intention ; only at two o’clock Lyttelton said, at the treasury, that there would be business at the House. The motion was, to augment our naval force, which, Pitt said, was the only method of putting an end to the rebellion. Ships built a year hence to suppress an army of Highlanders now marching through England ! My uncle attacked him, and congratulated his country on the wisdom of the modern young men ; and said, he had a son of two and twenty, who, he did not doubt, would come over wiser than any of them. Pitt was provoked, and retorted on his negotiations and *grey-headed* experience. At these words my uncle, as if he had been at Bartholomew fair, snatched off his wig, and showed his gray hairs, which made the *august senate* laugh, and put Pitt out, who, after laughing himself, diverted his venom upon Mr. Pelham. Upon the question, Pitt’s party amounted to but thirty-six ; in short, he has nothing left but his words, and his haughtiness, and his Lytteltons, and his Grenvilles. Adieu.”—Vol. i. pp. 451 – 453.

It should be borne in mind, whilst examining this capital picture of a scene in the House of Commons, that the painter bore a grudge against Pitt, who was one of the opposition to his father Sir Robert, and who did not, until after this time, publicly recant that measure of his political life. It was not without reason that Pitt wanted to be Secretary at War, (if indeed he did want to be,) for the imbecility of the gov-

ernment had wellnigh overturned it. Neither George the Second, nor his drunken genius of a first minister, Lord Granville, would believe the rebellion serious, until London was stricken with panic, and the Bank of England was reduced to paying out sixpences. When any of the ministry proposed any measure with regard to it to the King, he would answer, "Pho! don't talk to me of that stuff." With such a monarch and such a ministry, the great wonder is, that the insurrection was not successful. Never was a bolder experiment made upon a nation than the introduction of the House of Brunswick; a family which has been singularly unfortunate in its private relations, and which has possessed in the character of its principal members, about as little as can well be conceived, to recommend it to popular favor in Great Britain. George the First was an ignorant German, unable to speak a word of English, who lived at enmity with his father, his wife, and his son, and who brought from his native country little beyond a harem of females, like locusts to prey upon the body politic. One of these German women, having been insulted by the mob when riding in the streets of London, is said by Walpole to have put her head out of the coach, and cried in bad English, "Good people, why do you abuse us? We come for all your goods." "Yes," was the quick-witted reply in the crowd, "d—ye, and for all our chattels too." The answer was true as it was witty, and yet even the rapacity of these leeches was doubtless a blessing compared to the return of the exiled family. George the Second commenced his reign by putting upon his father the only insult left within his power to cast, and bestowed upon his own son the thorough and unqualified hatred which that father had extended to him. To his wife he was apparently kind and affectionate, notwithstanding that, without the palliation even of passion, he made her constantly submit to mortifications, which no females but Queens are ever expected to bear without a murmur. The reputation of the mother of George the Third is not entirely free from suspicion, whilst he himself, though exemplary in private life, was saved from the risk of extreme unpopularity, consequent upon his self-will and obstinacy, only by the happening of that calamity, which covered all his defects, as a public man, under the mantle of universal sympathy with overwhelming misfortune. Of the

character, personal or political, of his son George the Fourth, it is not necessary now to speak, whilst the leading and disgraceful events of his private life are still fresh in the memory of men. The late sovereign was scarce a whit more respectable in his youth,—and not one of all the line has ever been noted for a single popular quality attaching to his manners, or for a spark of genius or political ability, to secure respect; yet in spite of all these drawbacks, no family in English history has been fixed more firmly upon the throne, or has, on the whole, more fully confirmed the stability and promoted the prosperity of British institutions, and of the English nation.

But we cannot spare time or space to consider mere anomalies in history, when needing both so much to do justice to the Letters before us. We cannot quote half so much as we would, although we endeavour not to select such portions as are obviously most striking, and for that reason have already been frequently noticed by other journals. Horace Walpole does not appear to have been desirous of taking any great part in political affairs. He spoke seldom in the House of Commons;—once, however, with some effect, upon the motion to raise a committee to investigate the official conduct of his father, although the natural sympathy for him in his peculiar situation must have contributed to this effect far more than the substance of his speech. His opinions were in unison with those of the Whig party, although tinged with a little of the oddness, which marked every thing about him. He was an aristocrat of the first water, yet professing a contempt for kings, and lauding the conduct of the regicide judges. He was sharp to censure the misconduct of the minister, yet generally voting with him in the House. In one or two cases he appears to have acted without beforehand precisely defining, in his own mind, the adequateness of the means used to attain the end which he proposed to gain. We think his attempt to save Admiral Byng is creditable to his feelings, although it seems to have been neither well digested, nor happily executed. He was too near to the management of the details, not to lose sight of general principles and systems of policy. The character of his mind was not suited to statesmanship, and he did not pretend to it. Yet he has been as solemnly tried for his political opinions by some of the critics of his own country, as if he had stood in the same position as his father. This appears to us to be not

only unjust to him, but positively ridiculous. It certainly is no sign of inconsistency in him, that he censures the butchers of Louis the Sixteenth, while he maintains the abstract right of a people in certain cases to execute a king; nor is it discreditable to his feelings that he should prefer to study the manners of the Court of Louis the Fourteenth, to watching the bloody vicissitudes of the reign of terror. His opinions were not intended to operate upon the public mind, but to amuse his correspondents. And, if they are not always strictly consistent with each other or very deliberately formed, he ought not to be held to a rigid responsibility for the deficiency. These are letters, and not political essays. They have all the charm of unpremeditated and unguarded compositions. And, when considering them as such, we think they are particularly creditable to the author for two reasons; one, that they show not only a great deal of penetration and foresight, as to the effect of public measures, as for example in the policy that led to the war of our Revolution, but a correctness of moral judgment which we did not look for in the author. The second reason is, that they do not manifest any of those personal hopes or fears, the existence of which a thoroughly selfish character, as he has been called, would most inevitably have betrayed.

We have already remarked, that Sir Robert, during the period of his administration, if he did not study to enrich himself, took care to provide very abundantly for his children at the public expense. His moral sense was not more nice in this regard than that of many hundreds of ministers who have lived before and after him. Horace, although only the third son, and no great favorite, never cost his father more than £250 after he became of age, because he was then placed, and continued nearly through life, in the enjoyment of two or three lucrative sinecures, which yielded him three or four thousand pounds a year. This gave him an opportunity to cultivate his peculiar tastes. He became an antiquary, a dealer in *virtù*, a builder after his own fashion, for all which he has been reproached with far more severity than if, like many of his rank in England, including, we believe, his own brothers and nephew, he had squandered his fortune at the gaming-table and in all other imaginable vices. He became an author, and he set up a private printing press at Strawberry Hill, from which he issued copies of works in

so limited numbers as to make them sought after on account of their rarity. He valued his pursuits in proportion as they were shared by few. All this had no tendency to make him popular. He was sarcastic in his writing, and this never conciliates a reader. All concede to him now a great literary reputation, whilst everybody appears to do it grudgingly. His romance enjoyed a great and general popularity, until it was overwhelmed by extravagant imitations. He wrote a tragedy, which has been praised by many of the most eminent men of his own country, but which alone would never have preserved his fame, for at this day few can be found who have read it. He published a small volume, calling in question the correctness of the character commonly given in history to Richard the Third, which was more admired for its ingenuity, than productive of any material change in the popular opinion. He compiled other books, professing all the while the utmost dislike of the reputation of a literary man, as if a gentleman had something to be ashamed of in pursuing any useful occupation. Yet all these productions, and Strawberry Hill into the bargain, which, even as we write, is becoming despoiled of its treasure of curiosities, would not have immortalized him without the aid of the incomparable Letters before us.

The specimens we have thus far quoted have been all political in their character. Let us now select on a different principle.

“ TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

“ Strawberry Hill, June 6, 1752.

“ I have just been in London for two or three days, to fetch an adventure, and am returned to my hill and castle. I can't say I lost my labor, as you shall hear. Last Sunday night, being as wet a night as you shall see in a summer's day, about half an hour after twelve, I was just come home from White's, and, undressing to step into bed, I heard Harry, who you know lies forwards, roar out 'Stop thief!' and run down stairs. I ran after him. Don't be frightened; I have not lost one enamel, nor bronze, nor have been shot through the head again. A gentleman, who lives at Governor Pitt's, next door but one to me, and where Mr. Bentley used to live, was going to bed too, and heard people breaking into Mr. Freeman's house, who, like some acquaintance of mine in Albemarle Street, goes out of town, locks up his doors, and leaves the community to watch his furniture. N. B. It was broken open but two years

ago, and I, and all the chairmen, vow they shall steal his house away another time, before we shall trouble our heads about it. Well, madam called out ‘watch,’ two men who were sentinels ran away, and Harry’s voice after them. Down came I, and, with a posse of chairmen and watchmen, found the third fellow in the area of Mr. Freeman’s house. Mayhap you have seen all this in the papers, little thinking who commanded the detachment. Harry fetched a blunderbuss to invite the thief up. One of the chairmen, who was drunk, cried, ‘Give me the blunderbuss, I’ll shoot him!’ But as the general’s head was a little cooler, he prevented military execution, and took the prisoner without bloodshed, intending to make his triumphal entry into the metropolis of Twickenham with his captive tied to the wheels of his post-chaise. I find my style rises so much with the recollection of my victory, that I don’t know how to descend to tell you that the enemy was a carpenter, and had a leather apron on. The next step was to share my glory with my friends. I despatched a courier to White’s for George Selwyn, who, you know, loves nothing upon earth so well as a criminal, except the execution of him. It happened very luckily, that the drawer, who received my message, has very lately been robbed himself and had the wound fresh in his memory. He stalked up into the club-room, stopped short, and with a hollow, trembling voice said, ‘Mr. Selwyn! Mr. Walpole’s compliments to you, and he has got a housebreaker for you!’ A squadron immediately came to reinforce me, and, having summoned Moreland with the keys of the fortress, we marched into the house to search for more of the gang. Colonel Seabright, with his sword drawn, went first, and then I, exactly the figure of Robinson Crusoe, with a candle and lantern in my hand, a carbine upon my shoulder, my hair wet and about my ears, and in a linen night-gown and slippers. We found the kitchen shutters forced, but not finished; and in the area a tremendous bag of tools, a hammer large enough for the hand of a Jael, and six chisels. All which *opima spolia*, as there was no temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in the neighbourhood, I was reduced to offer on the altar of Sir Thomas Clarges.” — Vol. II. pp. 129, 130.

Here is painting, as clear as words can make it. Walpole tells us in one of his letters, that he became an author to avoid being thought by the world a fool, having always lived in terror of that oracular saying, ‘*Ἡρώων παῖδες λοῦβοι*, which his friend Bentley, upon the requisition of his learned father, translated, “The sons of heroes are loobies.” He need not have felt much anxiety on this score. Hero as the father in

this instance was, and superior as was the influence exerted by him over the world of his own generation, he has left nothing to take hold of the public of later times, like these productions of his "looby" son.

We should never be tired of quoting passages that interest us, and we find it extremely difficult to insert an extract, without adding the rest of the letter from which it was taken. One, however, we cannot pass over. It is the author's account of one of the most celebrated efforts of the elder Pitt, when declaring his breach with the Newcastle administration, which ultimately broke it down. It is given in a letter to General Conway.

"Arlington Street, Nov. 15, 1755.

"I promised you histories, and there are many people that take care I should have it in my power to keep my word. To begin in order, I should tell you, that there were 289 members at the Cockpit meeting, the greatest number ever known there; but Mr. Pitt, who is too great a general to regard numbers, especially when there was a probability of no great harmony between the commanders, did not, however, postpone giving battle. The engagement was not more decisive than long; we sat till within a quarter of five in the morning; an uninterrupted serious debate from before two. Lord Hillsborough moved the address, and very injudiciously supposed an opposition. Martin, Legge's secretary, moved to omit, in the address, the indirect approbation of the treaties, and the direct assurances of protection to Hanover. These questions were at length divided; and, against Pitt's inclination, the last, which was the least unpopular, was first decided by a majority of 311 against 105. Many then went away; and, on the next division, the numbers were 290 to 89. These are the general outlines. The detail of the speeches, which were very long, and some extremely fine, it would be impossible to give you in any compass. On the side of the opposition, (which I must tell you, by the way, though it set out decently, seems extremely resolved,) the speakers (I name them in order) were; the 3d Colebrook, Martin, Northey, Sir Richard Lyttelton, Doddington, George Grenville, Sir F. Dashwood Beckford, Sir G. Lee, Legge, Potter, Dr. Hay, George Townshend, Lord Egmont, Pitt, and Admiral Vernon; on the other side, were Lord Hillsborough, O'Brien, young Stanhope,* Hamilton, Alstone, Ellis, Lord Barrington, Sir G.

* Son of the Earl of Chesterfield; who, upon this occasion, addressed the House for the first time. 'His father,' says Dr. Maty, 'took infinite pains to prepare him for his first appearance as a speaker. The young

Lyttelton, Nugent, Murray, Sir T. Robinson, my uncle, and Mr. Fox. As short as I can, I will give you an account of them. Sir Richard, Beckford, G. Townshend, the Admiral of course, Martin, Stanhope, and Ellis, were very bad; Doddington was well, but very *acceding*; Dr. Hay, by no means answers his reputation; it was easy, but not striking. Lord Egmont was doubling, absurd, and obscure. Sir G. Lee and Lord Barrington were much disliked; I don't think so deservedly. Poor Alstone was mad, and spoke ten times to order. Sir George, our friend, was dull and timid. Legge was the latter. Nugent roared, and Sir Thomas rumbled. My uncle did justice to himself, and was as wretched and dirty as his whole behaviour for his coronet has been. Mr. Fox was extremely fatigued and did little. George Grenville's was very fine, and much beyond himself, and very pathetic. The Attorney General,* in the same style and, very artful, was still finer. Then there was a young Mr. Hamilton,† who spoke for the first time, and was at once perfection; his speech was set, and full of antithesis, but those antitheses were full of argument; indeed, his speech was the most argumentative of the whole day, and he broke through the regularity of his own composition, answered other people, and fell into his own track again with the greatest ease. His figure is advantageous, his voice strong and clear, his manner spirited, and the whole with the ease of an established speaker. You will ask, what could be beyond this? Nothing, but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt! He spoke at past one, for an hour and thirty-five minutes; there was more humor, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short, more astonishing perfections, than even you, who are used to him, can conceive. He was not abusive, yet very attacking on all sides; he ridiculed my Lord Hillsborough, crushed poor Sir George, terrified the Attorney, lashed my Lord Granville, painted my Lord of Newcastle, attacked Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the Duke. A few of the Scotch were in the minority, and most of the Princess's people, not all; all the Duke of Bedford's in the majority. He himself spoke in the other House for the address

man seems to have succeeded tolerably well upon the whole, but on account of his shyness was obliged to stop, and, if I am not mistaken, to have recourse to his notes. Lord Chesterfield used every argument in his power to comfort him, and to inspire him with confidence and courage, to make some other attempt; but I have not heard, that Mr. Stanhope ever spoke again in the House."

"* William Murray, afterwards Lord Mansfield."

"† William Gerard Hamilton. It was this speech which, not being followed, as was naturally expected, by repeated exhibitions of similar eloquence, acquired for him the name of *single speech* Hamilton."

(though professing uncertainty about the treaties themselves), against my Lord Temple and Lord Halifax, without a division. My Lord Talbot was neuter; he and I were of a party; my opinion was strongly with the opposition; I could not vote for the treaties; I would not vote against Mr. Fox. It is ridiculous perhaps at the end of such a debate, to give an account of my own silence; and, as it is of very little consequence what I did, so it is very unlike me to justify myself. You know how much I hate *professions* of integrity; and my pride is generally too great to care what the generality of people say of me; but your heart is good enough to make me wish you should think well of mine.

"You will want to know what is to be the fate of the ministry in opposition; but that I can't tell you. I don't believe they have determined what to do, more than oppose, nor that it is determined what to do with them. Though it is clear, that it is very humiliating to leave them in place, you may conceive several reasons why it is not eligible to dismiss them. *You* know, where you are, how easy it is to buy an opposition who have not places; but tell us what to do with an opposition that has places? If you say, Turn them out; I answer, That is not the way to quiet any opposition, or a ministry so constituted as ours at present. Adieu!" — Vol. II. pp. 289, 290.

This celebrated speech of Mr. Pitt, in opposition to the treaties of subsidy to sustain Hanover, cost him his office. A very full account of the debate is given in our author's "*Memoires of the last Ten Years of the Reign of George the Second*," and constitutes the most interesting portion of that work. It was in the course of that speech, that he compared the junction of the two parts of the Administration, the Duke of Newcastle and Mr. Fox, the first Lord Holland, to the conflux of the Rhone and the Saone, with that sort of extraordinary success, which always attends forcible and novel illustrations in oratory. Yet this great speech, which excited enthusiasm in a mind neither very friendly to the speaker, nor apt at any time to be carried away, lasted only an hour and thirty-five minutes. And this great debate, which called out all the talent of the House of Commons, in which Murray and Hamilton, George Grenville and Pitt, took a part worthy of the reputations they were earning; this great debate, in which twenty-nine persons addressed the House in succession, was finished and the question brought to a decision in fifteen hours from the time when it commenced.

And why can it not be so in this day ? Why is it, that our speakers in Congress do not find themselves able to say all they have to say upon any given topic, within the same compass ? The reason, we fear, is to be found in the wretched habits of mental discipline, which prevail among us, even as to the best educated. It may be, that the schoolmaster has been abroad for a few years past ; but, if so, there can be little doubt that the logician has been left all the while in prison at home. A *normal* school, which should set out with preparing a new race of teachers, solely of the art of reasoning to the matter in hand, would be the greatest possible benefaction to the affairs of the United States. Mr. Pitt, notwithstanding that he did not take up two hours of the time of the House of Commons in one of his most elaborate efforts, notwithstanding that he began the session with a majority of two hundred against him, in the course of one short year absolutely forced his way into the lead of the administration, and drove both his opponents, the Duke of Newcastle and Mr. Fox, out of power. Neither does it seem to have been long speaking, that recommended Murray to the high post from which, as Lord Mansfield, he subsequently became famous in the world.

But we find ourselves insensibly wandering away into politics again, when we have much else to notice in the course of these Letters. Horace Walpole was only an observer of political affairs, and we should be giving a very incorrect idea of him, if we led any of our readers to infer, from the selections we make, that his Letters are only political. The most striking feature about them is the abundance of anecdote, which he has collected about all the principal people in England of his time. He was a man much in social life, and a frequent visiter of the loo tables of the lady dowagers, at which he picked up all the gossip of the day. He was a student of forms, and liked to deal in minute particulars, whether regarding old furniture, that had some association with historical personages of by-gone time, or the scandal about the Duchess of Kendall, Lady Yarmouth, or the Earl of Bute, or Miss Chudleigh's vagaries, or, in fine, any thing that was current at the moment. For all this, he has been charged with having the soul of a gentleman usher, just as if he had never thought of any thing else, or had not been made capable, by this very faculty of close observation,

of drawing pictures of more important scenes, infinitely beyond the power of the most supercilious of his critics. Walpole is the annalist of his times. To him will posterity go for the history of the reigns of George the Second and Third, rather than to Smollett, or Bissett, or Belsham, because he can make a dull period amusing, whilst they are more likely to make a lively one dull.

Let us now come down to the coronation of George the Third, and select one letter, descriptive of the procession upon that occasion.

“ TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

“ Arlington Street, Sept. 24, 1761.

“ I am glad you arrived safe in Dublin, and hitherto like it so well ; but your trial is not begun yet. When your King comes, the ploughshares will be put into the fire. Bless your stars, that your King is not to be married or crowned. All the vines of Bordeaux, and all the fumes of Irish brains, cannot make a town so drunk, as a regal wedding and coronation. I am going to let London cool, and will not venture into it again this fortnight. O ! the buzz, the prattle, the crowds, the noise, the hurry ! Nay, people are so little come to their senses, that, though the coronation was but the day before yesterday, the Duke of Devonshire had forty messages yesterday, desiring tickets for a ball, that they fancied was to be at court last night. People had sat up a night and a day, and yet wanted to see a dance. If I was to entitle ages, I would call this the *century of crowds*. For the coronation, if a puppet-show could be worth a million, that is. The multitudes, balconies, guards, and processions made Palace-yard the liveliest spectacle in the world ; the hall was the most glorious. The blaze of lights, the richness and variety of habits, the ceremonials, the benches of peers and peeresses, frequent and full, was as awful as a pageant can be ; and yet, for the King’s sake and my own, I never wish to see another ; nor am impatient to have my Lord Effingham’s promise fulfilled. The King complained, that so few precedents were kept for their proceedings. Lord Effingham owned, the earl marshal’s office had been strangely neglected ; but he had taken such care for the future, that the *next coronation* would be regulated in the most exact manner imaginable. The number of peers and peeresses present was not very great ; some of the latter, with no excuse in the world, appeared in Lord Lincoln’s gallery, and even walked about the hall indecently in the intervals of the procession. My Lady Harrington, covered with all the diamonds she could borrow, hire, or seize, and with the air of Roxana, was the finest figure

at a distance ; she complained to George Selwyn, that she was to walk with Lady Portsmouth, who would have a wig and a stick. — ‘Pho,’ said he, ‘you will only look as if you were taken up by the constable.’ She told this everywhere, thinking the reflection was on my Lady Portsmouth. Lady Pembroke, alone at the head of the countesses, was the picture of majestic modesty ; the Duchess of Richmond as pretty as nature and dress, with no pains of her own, could make her ; Lady Spencer, Lady Sutherland, and Lady Northampton, very pretty figures. Lady Kildare, still beauty itself, if not a little too large. The ancient peeresses were by no means the worst party ; Lady Westmoreland still handsome, and with more dignity than all ; the Duchess of Queensbury looked well, though her locks milk-white ; Lady Albemarle very genteel ; nay, the middle age had some good representatives in Lady Holderness, Lady Rochford, and Lady Stratford, the perfectest little figure of all. My Lady Suffolk ordered her robes, and I dressed part of her head, as I made some of my Lord Hertford’s dress ; for you know, no profession comes amiss to me, from a tribune of the people to a habit-maker. Don’t imagine, that there were not figures as excellent on the other side ; old Exeter, who told the King he was the handsomest man she ever saw ; old Effingham and a Lady Say and Seale, with her hair powdered and her tresses black, were an excellent contrast to the handsome. Lord B***** put on rouge upon his wife and the Duchess of Bedford, in the painted chamber ; the Duchess of Queensbury told me, of the latter, that she looked like an orange-peach half red and half yellow. The coronets of the peers, and their robes, disguised them strangely ; it required all the beauty of the Dukes of Richmond and Marlborough to make them noticed. One there was, though of another species, the noblest figure I ever saw, the high constable of Scotland, Lord Errol ; as one saw him in a space capable of containing him, one admired him. At the wedding, dressed in tissue, he looked like one of the giants in Guildhall, new gilt. It added to the energy of his person, that one considered him acting so considerable a part in that very hall, where so few years ago one saw his father, Lord Kilmarnock, condemned to the block. The champion acted his part admirably, and dashed down his gauntlet with proud defiance. His associates, Lord Effingham, Lord Talbot, and the Duke of Bedford were woful ; Lord Talbot piqued himself on backing his horse down the hall, and not turning its rump towards the King, but he had taken such pains to dress it to that duty, that it entered backwards ; and at his retreat the spectators clapped, a terrible indecorum, but suitable to such Bartholomew Fair doings. He had twenty *démêlés* and came out of none of them creditably. He had

taken away the table of the Knights of the Bath, and was forced to admit two in their old place, and dine the others in the court of requests. Sir William Stanhope said, 'We are ill-treated, for *some of us* are gentlemen.' Beckford told the Earl, it was hard to refuse a table to the city of London, whom it would cost ten thousand pounds to banquet the King, and that his lordship would repent it, if they had not a table in the hall; they had. To the barons of the Cinque-ports, who made the same complaint, he said, 'If you come to me as Lord Steward, I tell you, it is impossible; if as Lord Talbot, I am a match for any of you;' and then he said to Lord Bute, 'If I were a minister, thus I would talk to France, to Spain, to the Dutch,—none of your half measures.' This has brought me to a melancholy topic. Bussy goes to-morrow, a Spanish war is hanging in the air, destruction is taking a new lease of mankind,—of the remnant of mankind. I have no prospect of seeing Mr. Conway. Adieu! I will not disturb you with my forebodings."—Vol. III. pp. 145–147.

One charge has been brought against our author, which seems to be very strongly founded. He was not very firm in his friendships, neither was he of that sort of temperament which admitted of unrestrained intimacy. His house was his castle in truth, and he loved no person to share it with him. He quarrelled with his friend Gray, the poet, before they could finish their tour on the continent together, and had the candor to admit, long afterwards, that he was the person to blame for it. He quarrelled with his uncle, Horace Walpole, most violently, and never did him justice in any of his writings. So it was with Mr. Bentley, with George Montagu, and with Mr. Fox; with all of whom he once was upon terms of intimacy. Incidents of this kind may occasionally happen in the life of a man, and he may nevertheless be innocent of blame for them; but, when they are perpetually recurring, and that with persons wholly different in disposition from each other, the inevitable inference is, that the fault lies somewhere in his own character. Yet, although these facts go to establish against Walpole the charge of instability in friendships, they do not prove that he was incapable of any durable one. Towards General Conway he remained uniform in his feelings throughout his long life; and the intensity of them seemed to increase in proportion as his attachment to others grew weak. Another of his intimacies deserves more particular notice on account of its singularity. In one of his visits to Paris, where he

became the fashion on account of a squib against Rousseau which he published, purporting to be a letter addressed to that personage by the king of Prussia, he became acquainted with Madame du Deffand, an old lady, whose blindness and general loss of strength did not in the least prevent her from taking that eager interest in the doings of the world around her, so characteristic of most French people. Yet, although she was seventy, and Walpole fifty years old, at the time of the formation of this intimacy, he, who ridiculed others, felt so afraid of being ridiculed himself on account of this sentimental attachment, that much of his epistolary communication with her is taken up in positive and not very gentle scolding for using towards him too many French epithets of endearment.

The letters of Madame du Deffand, had they come from a young woman, might doubtless have led to a misconstruction of a grave nature ; but they would not then have caused to Walpole nearly the same degree of vexation. The idea of flirting with an antique was too much for his philosophy. That he could imagine such an idea as entering into the heads even of the malicious people about the French Court, who might have an opportunity to inspect the correspondence while on its way, as was the practice of the time, gives one a tolerable clue to one of his greatest foibles. He was suspicious and irritable, and yet he was kind and generous withal. Otherwise, it would be hard to account for his repeated visits afterwards to Paris, simply for the sake of gratifying her, and for his offers to make up to her from his own fortune all deficiencies, at a moment when she was apprehensive of losing a part of her pension, the means of her subsistence. What could there be in her situation, to induce Walpole to go a step out of his way from any motives, other than the most disinterested ones ? She was a lone woman, weary of the world, and yet loath to quit it, regarding futurity only as a more dreary void, than that which already existed in her own heart. To her, the society or correspondence of Walpole was a relief from the monotony of her life and the *ennui* of her own thoughts, whilst he had not yet attained the age when company was essential to his amusement or happiness. We think this intimacy does him on the whole great credit, and the correspondence resulting from it constitutes one of the most interesting episodes in

the whole of his career. We have sometimes regretted, that his letters to her had not been published in full, in connexion with hers to him ; notwithstanding the probability, that, being written in a language, of the idioms of which he was not perfectly master, they would not contrast very well with the graceful and feminine elegance with which she used it. There is a valuable moral to be drawn from her letters, over and above the amusement and information which they furnish. They show the struggle of a mind and heart, naturally good, against the lessons of a mere worldly philosophy, and that the very failure to reach something better, in her case, was the consequence of not early learning the only source from which she could have obtained it. Intimacy with Philip of Orleans, the libertine of libertines, was not the best calculated preparation in her youth for happiness or comfort in her old age. Religion was to her a cipher. The result was, that life, tedious as it became at last, was better to her than the blank hereafter, which she could not fill up if she would, and which she would not if she could.

Religion appears to have been very little in the mind of Walpole himself, at any period of his life. But he was an outward respecter of morals, and there is a general correctness of tone running through his opinions upon the subject, at which we were somewhat surprised, considering the school in which he was brought up. His father, Sir Robert, was a very loose and a very coarse man in private life, piquing himself somewhat upon his "bonnes fortunes." He himself, we are told, was thought to be no favorite with that father, on account of the suspected fidelity of his mother. After the death of that mother, Sir Robert introduced his mistress, Maria Skerrett, as her successor, whose daughter was legitimated by patent at the period of his fall. To the profligacy of his eldest brother's wife, the early portion of these letters is perpetually alluding, whilst his other brother left, as his only family, three natural daughters, who, notwithstanding their illegitimacy, appear in succession in this correspondence as the Honorable Mrs. Keppel, Lady Waldegrave, and Lady Dysart. With such associations as these, it would not have been surprising, if his own epistolary style had carried with it all the poison which marks that of Lord Chesterfield. But it does not. The only effect, which they seem to have produced, lies on the surface, in the occasional

introduction of coarse allusions and indelicate anecdote ; a practice which a polished writer, at the present day, would not think of adopting, but which, in his own age, was by no means peculiar to Walpole. He has none of the obtuseness, as to political morality, which distinguished such men as Bubb Doddington, the Duke of Newcastle, and most of the leading politicians of the time, nor does he seek to excuse the means to which his father resorted when endeavouring to maintain his power. The only palliation that can be urged is, that he did no more than any man of his time would have done in his place ; but Walpole does not press even that. Upon the African slave-trade, he early had very strong and just notions. Yet, notwithstanding this, to the last day of his life, he appears to have thought little upon serious subjects. He too, like Madame du Deffand, felt the loneliness incident to old age, when deprived of all the endearing ties of family affection, and his last moments were tormented by fear of the desertion of two ladies, upon whose attentions he was conscious he had no other claim than that of charity for suffering. Such is the inevitable consequence of a mere worldly life ; of the enjoyment of what is called society, at the expense of the social and religious affections. These two distinguished instances, in the most celebrated capitals of modern Europe, ought to operate rather as a warning what to avoid, than an example what to pursue.

Our author has been censured for his opinions of contemporary literature, with the same spirit of fault-finding, which has pervaded the examination of all the rest of his character, and with even less reason here, as it seems to us, than elsewhere. That posterity very seldom confirms the judgment passed by literary men upon the productions of their own age, has long been known. Great temporary popularity is no sign of a permanent reputation to any author, neither is the verdict of the learned in every case found to be without appeal. Walpole has committed no greater errors of taste or of judgment, than can be cited against almost any distinguished man, of whose judgments as much is recorded as of his. He did admire Dr. Darwin and Crebillon's "Sofa," it is true, and he did not admire Thomson's "Seasons" and Dr. Johnson. But Johnson himself admired Blackmore, and censured Gray. How many decisions are there of Sir Walter Scott or Lord Byron, which the course even of the very short

time since their death has reversed ! The traveller, who looks round upon a scene, finds his attention caught by those objects which are nearest to him, and is apt to overlook the relative importance which they bear to more distant ones ; whilst a voyager in a ship, as it recedes from the same spot, would notice only those features of the landscape which are in themselves positively prominent. Just so is it with the writings of men, who are living around us. We judge them under a thousand impulses, which have no connexion with the merit or demerit of the things themselves. Perhaps the novelty is startling ; perhaps we know the author ; perhaps it is fashionable to admire ; perhaps our taste is made up on the artificial standard created by our own generation, to conform to which some writer is making himself disgusting to all future time by his mannerism, though we perceive it not ; perhaps we are too far gone in satiety of good books longer to relish what is merely natural and simple. All these and a thousand other probabilities go to pervert our sentiments of present literature ; but another generation will spring up in season to set us right, as we may have set right that which preceded us. Horace Walpole was no bad critic at bottom, we think, when he addressed to Mr. John Pinkerton such remarks as these, erroneously stated to be now first published.

“ To *your* book, Sir, I am much obliged on many accounts ; particularly for having recalled my mind to subjects of delight, to which it was grown dulled by age and indolence. In consequence of your reclaiming it, I asked myself, whence you feel so much disregard for certain authors, whose fame is established ; you have assigned good reasons for withholding your approbation from some, on the plea of their being imitators ; it was natural, then, to ask myself again, whence they had obtained so much celebrity. I think I have discovered a cause, which I do not remember to have seen noted ; and *that* cause I suspect to have been, that certain of those authors possessed grace ; do not take me for a disciple of Lord Chesterfield, nor imagine that I mean to erect grace into a capital ingredient of writing ; but I do believe that it is a perfume, that will preserve from putrefaction, and is distinct even from style, which regards expression. *Grace*, I think, belongs to *manner*. It is from the charm of grace that I believe some authors, not in your favor, obtained part of their renown, Virgil in particular ; and yet I am far from disagreeing with you on his subject in general. There is such a dearth of invention in the *Æneid*, (and when he did invent, it was often

so foolishly,) so little good sense, so little variety, and so little power over the passions, that I have frequently said, from contempt for his matter and from the charm of his harmony, that I believe I should like his poem better, if I was to hear it repeated, and did not understand Latin. On the other hand, he has more than harmony; whatever he utters is said gracefully, and he ennobles his images, especially in the *Georgics*; or at least it is more sensible there from the humility of the subject. A Roman farmer might not understand his diction in agriculture; but he made a Roman courtier understand farming, the farming of that age, and could captivate a lord of Augustus's bedchamber, and tempt him to listen to themes of rusticity. On the contrary, Statius and Claudian, though talking of war, would make a soldier despise them as bullies. That graceful manner of thinking in Virgil seems to me to be more than style, if I do not refine too much; and I admire, I confess, Mr. Addison's phrase, that Virgil 'tossed about his dung with an air of majesty.' A style may be excellent without grace; for instance, Dr. Swift's. Eloquence may bestow an immortal style, and one of more dignity; yet eloquence may want that ease, that genteel air that flows from or constitutes grace. Addison himself was master of that grace, even in his pieces of humor, and which do not owe their merit to style; and from that combined secret he excels all men that ever lived, but Shakspeare, in humor, by never dropping into an approach towards burlesque and buffoonery, when even his humor descended to characters, that in any other hands would have been vulgarly low. Is not it clear that Will Wimble was a gentleman, though he always lived at a distance from good company? Fielding had as much humor, perhaps, as Addison; but, having no idea of grace, is perpetually disgusting. His innkeepers and parsons are the grossest of their profession; and his gentlemen are awkward, when they should be at their ease.

"The Grecians had grace in every thing; in poetry, in oratory, in statuary, in architecture, and, probably, in music and painting. The Romans, it is true, were their imitators; but having grace too, imparted it to their copies, which gave them a merit that almost raises them to the rank of originals. Horace's *Odes* acquired their fame, no doubt, from the graces of his manner and purity of his style, — the chief praise of Tibullus and Propertius, who certainly cannot boast of more meaning than Horace's *Odes*.

"Waller, whom you proscribe, Sir, owed his reputation to the graces of his manner, though he frequently stumbled, and even fell flat; but a few of his smaller pieces are as graceful as possible; one might say, that he excelled in painting ladies in enamel, but could not succeed in portraits in oil, large as life. Milton had such superior merit, that I will only say, that, if his angels,

his Satan, and his Adam have as much dignity as the Apollo Belvidere, his Eve has all the delicacy and graces of the Venus de Medicis ; as his description of Eden has the coloring of Albano. Milton's tenderness imprints ideas as graceful as Guido's Madonnas ; and the ' Allegro,' ' Penseroso,' and ' Comus ' might be denominated from the three Graces ; as the Italians gave similar titles to two or three of Petrarch's best sonnets.

"Cowley, I think, would have had grace (for his mind was graceful), if he had had any ear, or if his taste had not been vitiated by the pursuit of wit ; which, when it does not offer itself naturally, degenerates into tinsel or pertness. Pertness is the mistaken affectation of grace, as pedantry produces erroneous dignity ; the familiarity of the one, and the clumsiness of the other, distort or prevent grace. Nature, that furnishes samples of all qualities, and on the scale of gradation exhibits all possible shades, affords us types that are more apposite than words. The eagle is sublime, the lion majestic, the swan graceful, the monkey pert, the bear ridiculously awkward. I mention these, as more expressive and comprehensive than I could make definitions of my meaning ; but I will apply the swan only, under whose wings I will shelter an apology for Racine, whose pieces give me an idea of that bird. The coloring of the swan is pure ; his attitudes are graceful ; he never displeases you when sailing on his proper element. His feet may be ugly, his notes hissing, not musical, his walk not natural ; he can soar, but it is with difficulty ; still, the impression the swan leaves is that of grace. So does Racine.

"Boileau may be compared to the dog, whose sagacity is remarkable, as well as its fawning on its master, and its snarling at those it dislikes. If Boileau was too austere to admit the pliability of grace, he compensates by good sense and propriety. He is like (for I will drop animals) an upright magistrate, whom you respect, but whose justice and severity leave an awe that discourages familiarity. His copies of the ancients may be too servile ; but if a good translator deserves praise, Boileau deserves more. He certainly does not fall below his originals ; and, considering at what period he wrote, has greater merit still. By his imitations, he held out to his countrymen models of taste, and banished totally the bad taste of his predecessors. For his ' Lutrin,' replete with excellent poetry, wit, humor, and satire, he certainly was not obliged to the ancients. Excepting Horace, how little idea had either Greeks or Romans of wit and humor ; Aristophanes and Lucian, compared with moderns, were the one a blackguard, and the other a buffoon. In my eyes, the ' Lutrin,' the ' Dispensary,' and the ' Rape of the Lock ' are standards of grace and elegance, not to be paralleled by antiquity ; and eternal reproaches to Voltaire, whose indelicacy in the ' Pucelle ' de-

grade him as much, when compared with the three authors I have named, as his '*Henriade*' leaves Virgil, and even Lucan, whom he more resembles, by far his superiors.

"The '*Dunciad*' is blemished by the offensive images of the games; but the poetry appears to me admirable; and though the fourth book has obscurities, I prefer it to the three others; it has descriptions not surpassed by any poet that ever existed, and which surely a writer merely ingenious will never equal. The lines on Italy, on Venice, on Convents, have all the grace for which I contend as distinct from poetry, though united with the most beautiful; and the '*Rape of the Lock*,' besides the originality of great part of the invention, is a standard of graceful writing.

"In general, I believe that what I call grace, is denominated elegance; but by grace I mean something higher. I will explain myself by instances. Apollo is graceful, Mercury elegant. Petrarch, perhaps, owed his whole merit to the harmony of his numbers and the graces of his style. They conceal his poverty of meaning and want of variety. His complaints, too, may have added an interest, which, had his passion been successful, and had expressed itself with equal sameness, would have made the number of his sonnets insupportable. Melancholy, in poetry, I am inclined to think, contributes to grace, when it is not disgraced by pitiful lamentations, such as Ovid's and Cicero's in their banishments. We respect melancholy, because it imparts a similar affection, pity. A gay writer, who should only express satisfaction without variety, would soon be nauseous.

"Madame de Sévigné shines both in grief and gaiety. There is too much of sorrow for her daughter's absence; yet it is always expressed by new terms, by new images, and often by wit, whose tenderness has a melancholy air. When she forgets her concern, and returns to her natural disposition, gaiety, every paragraph has novelty; her allusions, her applications, are the happiest possible. She has the art of making you acquainted with all her acquaintances, and attaches you even to the spots she inhabited. Her language is correct, though unstudied; and, when her mind is full of any great event, she interests you with the warmth of a dramatic writer, not with the chilling impartiality of an historian. Pray read her accounts of the death of Turenne, and of the arrival of King James in France, and tell me whether you do not know their persons as if you had lived at the time."

— Vol. iv. pp. 367 – 370.

Without yielding unqualified assent to all the opinions expressed in this letter, we must nevertheless maintain, that it is a pattern of graceful criticism, possessing the very quality which the author so carefully describes. Walpole is always

an original, perhaps sometimes an eccentric thinker, and seizes subjects in the way most agreeable to a reader. And where his strong prejudices do not operate he is generally just. For Dr. Johnson he entertained the disgust, which a refined gentleman will feel when brought in contact with an ill-mannered person ; and he had not the necessary patience to dig below the repulsive surface for the sake of the ore he might find beneath. It is a little curious, that, although the author, who lived so much in the world, mentions almost every incident of passing interest, he nowhere makes the remotest allusion to the publication of the *Letters of Junius*. This is adduced among other arguments by Sir Charles Grey, in a paper included in the present work, to prove that Walpole was himself their author. We have long since given up all hope of unveiling the mystery by the force of mere argument. But we have known the authorship ascribed to many with less probability than it is to Walpole. Far removed as his style is from that of the Unknown, it is not farther than that of Tooke, or of Chatham, or of Francis.

But we are conscious of having already extended our notice of these volumes too far, though we have by no means exhausted the topics which they suggest to us. So many and so various are these, growing as they do out of the correspondence of a long life, that we find ourselves unable to crowd them all within any tolerable compass. And so mixed is the character of the writer, containing within itself so much that is not agreeable, with a great deal that is interesting and pleasant to dwell upon, that it seems as if at every turn we found a new view to take of it. No letters can be pleasant or genuine, which do not furnish to the student of human nature ample materials for thought. That these do it in so great abundance, is a strong proof of their extraordinary merit. And, although we may find upon reading them, that men and things are described in a manner different from that which we are used to in history, yet that their way of doing it is in consonance with the results of our own observation in life, can hardly fail to be marked, even by the least observing. A youth may find pleasure and advantage in perusing those artificial narratives called philosophical histories ; but, as he becomes older, he will also become daily more apt to keep in his mind the words of the Chancellor Oxenstiern, and observe the little wisdom that men commonly use in the government of the world.
